

# South Atlantic Update

Published for fishermen and others interested in marine resource conservation issues

April 2001



## Marine Protected Areas Move Forward

### *Public Input Sought in Process*

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council has taken another step forward towards developing marine protected areas (MPAs) to use as a management tool to sustain fish stocks and fisheries in the South Atlantic. At the March 2001 meeting in Jekyll Island, Georgia the Council voted to hold a round of scoping meetings asking the public to recommend areas that the Council should examine in their consideration of MPAs. Council member Tony Iarocci, Chairman of the Council's MPA Committee suggests "we utilize the knowledge of the user groups who have hands on experience in their region, be site-specific when setting up criteria and keep it simple so that the average person can stay involved and understand the process".

*The Council defines marine protected areas as a network of specific areas of marine environments managed for the primary purpose of aiding in the recovery of overfished stocks and to insure the persistence of healthy fish stocks, fisheries and habitats. Such areas may be over natural or artificial bottom and may include prohibition of harvest on a permanent or time-specific basis.*

*(Continued page 4)*

## Public Hearings Begin for Rock Shrimp Limited Access Program

A series of 7 public hearings is scheduled for May and June to gather input from shrimp fishermen regarding a proposed amendment that would establish a limited access program for the rock shrimp fishery. Harvesters are concerned over the growing numbers of commercial fishermen targeting rock shrimp in the region and have requested the Council develop a limited access system, permit requirements and other measures.

The Controlled Access Committee met jointly with the Rock Shrimp Advisory Panel during the Council's March meeting to work out the final details and options of the plan. Based on recommendations from the Rock Shrimp AP, **the Council's preferred option would limit initial eligibility to fishermen who can demonstrate landings of at least 15,000 pounds in any one year from 1996 to 1999.** Other measures being considered include the use of operator permits, mesh size regulations, a vessel monitoring program and areas in which these measures would apply. Copies of the Public Hearing Document for the proposed Shrimp Amendment 5 can be obtained from the Council office. *(See page 3 for a complete listing of public hearing dates and locations.)*

The Council is soliciting public  
input on several issues.

See inside for meeting dates  
and locations.



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## SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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**Gregg T. Waugh**  
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**ASMFC**

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**US Fish & Wildlife**

Atlanta, GA

(404) 331-3588

**US Coast Guard**

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(305) 415-6778

**State Department**

Washington, DC

(202) 647-7948

The South Atlantic Council, one of eight U.S. regional fishery management councils, establishes conservation measures to ensure the viability of marine resources in federal waters (from three to two hundred nautical miles) off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and east Florida.

Fishery Management Plans prepared by the Council are designed to produce optimum yield, while preventing overfishing of our valuable resources. Council staff are available to answer questions during business hours by telephone at (843) 571-4366; by FAX at (843) 769-4520; or by E-Mail at [safmc@noaa.gov](mailto:safmc@noaa.gov).

### Editorial Note

*It's 6:00 am. The sky is just beginning to show the waking signs of a new morning. The ice has been loaded and the baits prepared. The engines are fueled and idle at the dock while the dock lines are being readied for departure. There is an air of anticipation as last minute provisions are loaded onboard. Soon it will be time for the fishing trip to begin.*

This scenario is repeated hundreds of times each morning as fishermen take to the ocean to target the day's catch. A charter boat with tourists visiting from Tennessee, a head boat loaded with convention visitors from Atlanta, a commercial fisherman preparing for a week-long trip, a tournament fisherman seeking prize money or a family on a weekend outing - all head out searching for their own "hot spots", hoping to bring fish back to the dock.

Here in the south Atlantic it is not unusual to see all of these fishermen heading out of the same inlet on any given day. The recent census confirms the continued migration of the nation's population to the coast. As fishing pressure increases so do the impacts on the resources the Council is mandated to conserve and manage. User conflicts also result as more and more people compete for their piece of the pie. Recently, the Council addressed conflicts over gear use in northeastern Florida. After hearing public testimony, a solution was agreed upon that will eventually minimize localized conflict. Participants in the public hearing process played a major role in resolving this problem.

This spring the Council is holding public scoping meetings regarding the use of marine protected areas (MPAs). An article in this issue of the Update outlines the Council's plans regarding MPAs and how the public can be involved. As Chairman of the Marine Protected Area Committee, I believe that MPAs will work, if done right and put in the right places. It is important that we utilize the knowledge of local user groups, who have hands on experience in their region. Take time to participate in this process. If you are unable to attend a scoping meeting, write to the Council. We should all work closer together with the resources' best interest as our number one priority.

Tony Iarocci

Council Member - Florida

### *Editor's Note*

The South Atlantic Update is published by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Its purpose is to report developments in fisheries management that would be of interest to its readers. Please credit the council when reprinting articles used in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to submit information or articles pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, or letters to the editor on a pertinent issue, is invited and encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Kim Iverson, Editor, South Atlantic Update, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, or may be sent via the internet; Email address: [kim.iverson@noaa.gov](mailto:kim.iverson@noaa.gov)

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(Continued from page 1)

## ROCK SHIMP PUBLIC HEARINGS

All meetings begin at 6:00 PM

**May 3, 2001**  
NC Dept. of Environment  
& Natural Resources  
127 Cardinal Drive  
Wilmington, NC  
Phone: 910-395-3900

**May 7, 2001**  
Radisson Beach Resort  
2600 N. A1A  
Fort Pierce, FL  
Phone: 561-465-5544

**May 8, 2001**  
Florida Fish & Wildlife  
Conservation Commission  
FL Marine Research Institute  
100 Eighth Avenue, SE  
St. Petersburg, FL  
Phone: 727/896-8626

**May 9, 2001**  
Lafayette Plaza Hotel  
301 Government Street  
Mobile, AL  
Phone: 334-694-010

**May 15, 2001**  
Town & Country Inn  
2008 Savannah Highway  
Charleston, SC 29407  
Phone: 843-571-1000

**May 24, 2001**  
University of Georgia  
Marine Extension Service  
715 Bay Street  
Brunswick, GA  
Phone: 912-264-7268

**May 29, 2001**  
Radisson Hampton  
700 Settlers Landing Road  
Hampton, VA  
757/727-9700

**June 19, 2001**  
Radisson Ponce de Leon  
4000 US Highway 1  
St. Augustine, FL  
Phone: 1-904-824-2821

Copies of the Public Hearing Document outlining the options being considered for the Rock Shrimp Fishery can be obtained by contacting the Council office.

## Public Scoping Meetings Address Proposed Changes to Shrimp Fishery

*"This increase pressure is not from the boats in this region that have typically fished in our area, but from large powerful boats coming mostly from the Gulf of Mexico as they deal with increased restrictions in their own waters."* John Wallace, President, Georgia Shrimper's Association

The Council is holding public scoping meetings to gather input regarding a proposal to implement management measures for the penaeid (white, brown and pink) shrimp fishery in federal waters in the south Atlantic. Additional regulations are being considered to address concerns raised by members of the traditional shrimp fleet in the region that new and larger vessels entering or considering entering the fishery are capable of fishing 24 hours a day and have much greater fishing power. Subsequently, fishermen are concerned about the possible displacement of local shrimp vessels and the unknown impacts these larger, highly efficient vessels will have on an already overcapitalized industry. The industry has also expressed concerns about the biological impacts of increased effort on shrimp stocks and possible increases in bycatch. Concerns are strongest among local shrimpers fishing from ports in South Carolina and Georgia.

Issues being considered for discussion at the scoping meetings include possible night-time closures for the shrimp fishery, a requirement for vessel permits and/or operator's permits and the establishment of maximum trawl gear size restrictions. Written comments regarding these issues should be addressed to the Council office. Additional information can be found at [www.safmc.noaa.gov](http://www.safmc.noaa.gov).

### Scoping Meeting Schedule

**April 17, 2001**  
**Morehead City, NC**  
Crystal Coastal Civic Center  
3505 Arendell Street  
252/247-3883

**April 19, 2001**  
**Bolivia, NC**  
Cooperative Ext. Building  
25 Referendum Drive  
910/253-2610

**May 15, 2001**  
**Charleston, SC**  
Town & Country Inn  
2008 Savannah Highway  
843/571-1000

**May 21, 2001**  
**Atlantic Beach, FL**  
Sea Turtle Inn  
1 Ocean Blvd.  
904/249-7402

## Marine Protected Areas (continued)

### ***Marine Protected Areas vs. Marine Reserves – What's the Difference?***

Last Spring, through informal meetings and scoping meetings the Council asked for the public's opinion on whether or not they should use marine protected areas as a management tool, only at that time the Council was using the term "marine reserves". What is the difference between "marine reserves" and MPAs? The answer depends on whom you ask. It seemed as though many people associate the term "marine reserves" with areas that were strictly no-take and the Council's definition had broader intentions. Because of this, the Council felt that it was appropriate to be more consistent with terms that were being used on the Federal level. It is the hope of the Council members that using the term marine protected areas will help the public better understand the Council's intent.

### ***What is the Council Considering?***

The Council has outlined 4 types of closures they will consider within MPAs:

(1) Permanently closed with no-take allowed; (2) Areas that are permanently closed with some take allowed; (3) Areas that are closed for a limited duration with no-take allowed (ie. spawning area closures); and (4) Areas that are closed for a limited duration with some take allowed. During the scoping process the Council will be focusing on Type 2 closures. What does this mean? It means that at this time the Council intends to consider areas in which they would prohibit the harvest of species in the snapper grouper management unit but allow harvest of other species such as coastal migratory pelagics (ie. mackerel, dolphin, wahoo). However, the public is invited to comment on all types of actions the Council has described.



**Scoping meeting participants discuss criteria for establishing Marine Protected Areas during a meeting held in Georgia last year.**

### ***What Next?***

The Council will review input from the scoping meetings and the Marine Protected Area Advisory Panel at their June meeting in St. Augustine, Florida and decide whether to continue the process of choosing areas for MPAs. If the Council decides to continue the process, an amendment to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan will be developed and public hearings will be held in the fall of 2001. The Council will review the public hearing comments and finalize the action at the December 3-7, 2001 Council meeting in North Carolina.

*Article by Kerry O'Malley, Council Staff Biologist*

**Written comments will be accepted for inclusion in the Council report for the June meeting. Comments must be submitted by May 21, 2001 and should be sent to Bob Mahood, Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407 or via email at [safmc@noaa.gov](mailto:safmc@noaa.gov) or FAX at 843/769-4520.**



### **Iarocci Selected for National MPA Advisory Committee**

Council member Tony Iarocci was recently selected to serve on the National MPA Advisory Committee. Tony, a commercial lobster fisherman from the Florida Keys, was selected from over 300 applicants to serve on the 26 member committee. The panel will provide expert advice to the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior on the development of a national system of MPAs. Tony is currently the Chairman of the Council's MPA and Lobster Committees. For more information on the National Marine Protected Area Committee, go online at [www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov).

## Marine Protected Area Public Scoping Meeting Schedule

### Meetings begin at 6:00 PM

#### **April 16, 2001**

#### **Morehead City, NC**

Crystal Coast Civic Center  
3505 Arendell Street  
Phone: 252-247-3883

#### **May 2, 2001**

#### **Ft. Pierce, FL**

Radisson Beach Resort  
2600 N. A1A  
Phone: 561-465-5544

#### **May 14, 2001**

#### **Myrtle Beach, SC**

St. John's Inn  
Oceanfront at 70<sup>th</sup> Av, N.  
Phone: 843-918-8000

#### **April 18, 2001**

#### **Wrightsville Beach, NC**

Blockade Runner  
275 Waynick Boulevard  
Phone: 910-256-2251

#### **May 3, 2001**

#### **Islamorada, FL**

Holiday Isle's Resort  
US Highway 1  
Phone: 305-664-2711

#### **May 15, 2001**

#### **Brunswick, GA**

University of Georgia Marine  
Extension Service  
715 Bay Street  
Phone: 912-264-7268

#### **May 1, 2001**

#### **Atlantic Beach, FL**

Sea Turtle Inn  
1 Ocean Boulevard  
Phone: 904-249-7402

#### **May 9, 2001**

#### **North Charleston, SC**

Embassy Suites  
N. Charleston Convention  
Center  
5055 International Blvd.  
Phone: 843-747-1882

#### **May 16, 2001**

#### **Richmond Hill, GA**

Richmond Hill City Hall  
40 Richard R. Davis Drive  
Phone: 912-756-3345

Copies of the MPA Scoping Document and other information can be found online at [www.safmc.noaa.gov](http://www.safmc.noaa.gov).  
The Marine Protected Area Advisory Panel will meet May 8-10, 2001 in North Charleston, SC.

## New Advisory Panel Members Appointed

During its March meeting the Council made several appointments to various advisory panels. The advisory panels (AP) are composed of experienced and knowledgeable members of the public who meet when necessary to provide the Council with information and guidance. Panel members include recreational and commercial fishermen, conservationists and scientists. Members serve for three-year terms and can be reappointed by the Council. If you are interested in serving on one of the Council's advisory panels, please contact the Council office or go online at [www.safmc.noaa.gov](http://www.safmc.noaa.gov) for an application.

**Coral AP** - Stephen Blair (Miami, FL) and Dr. Henry Feddern (Tavenier, FL) were reappointed. A new seat was created for North Carolina and Lees Sabo from Morehead City, NC was appointed.

**Dolphin Wahoo AP** - Several members were reappointed including; Bill Harrell (Charlotte, NC), Dewey Hemilright (Wanchese, NC), Joseph Shute (Morehead City, NC), David Harter (Hilton Head, SC), Cheshire Rhett (Charleston, SC), John Tortorici (Charleston, SC), Patrick Hahn (Savannah, GA), George Patterson (Savannah, GA), John Magursky (Key Largo, FL) and Ken Hinman (Leesburg, VA). The following new members were appointed; Jeff Jugan (Wilmington, NC), W.A. Phinney, Jr. (Beaufort, SC), Richard DeLizza (Pembroke Pines, FL), Kathleen McGowan (Ft. Lauderdale, FL).

**Golden Crab AP** - William Whipple (Key West, FL) was reappointed. Union Bethel (Dania Beach, FL) was appointed as a new member.

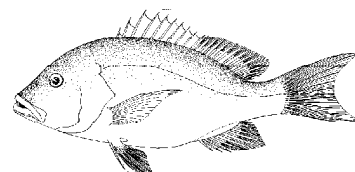
**Habitat & Environmental Protection AP** - James Harvey (West Palm Beach, FL) was reappointed. Three new members were appointed; Woodrow Collins (Hilton Head, SC), Catherine Harrington (Brunswick, GA), George McElvey (Crystal River, FL).

**Marine Protected Area AP** - Mark Marhefka (John's Island, SC) was reappointed. Jim Francesconi (Morehead City, NC), Jerry Schill (New Bern, NC), Reese Hair (Murrells Inlet, SC) and Charlie Phillips (Townsend, GA) were appointed as new members.

**Rock Shrimp AP** - Toby Saylor (Mt. Pleasant, SC) and John Williams (New Port Richey, FL) were appointed as new members.

**Snapper Grouper AP** - James B. Harker (Morehead City, NC) was reappointed. Alan Sprouse of Jacksonville, Florida was appointed as a new member.

**Spiny Lobster AP** - New member Michael Adams of Orangeburg, SC was appointed.



## Census Grant Aids Council in Identifying Fishing Communities

*"The undercounting of those that make their living from the sea can lead to policy decisions that would inaccurately reflect impacts felt by these fishermen." Dr. Kathi Kitner*

With the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, national standards were enacted that direct regional fishery management councils to consider fishing communities when writing or amending fishery management plans. The Councils must now, "take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities in order to (a) provide for the sustained participation of such communities, and (b) to the extent practicable, minimize adverse economic impacts on such communities." (MSFCMA). The Council is fortunate to have Dr. Kathi Kitner, a fisheries anthropologist, on its staff to compile and assess information pertaining to fishing communities. She is currently the only anthropologist on staff within the eight regional fishery management councils in the country.

In order to assist efforts to gather baseline data, Dr. Kitner recently secured a grant from the US Census Bureau that will aid in gathering social data about fishing communities. "An assessment of social impacts must be carried out for various management plans," explained Dr. Kitner. "Unfortunately, social data on US fishing communities is generally sparse and not often comparable."

The Census Bureau has been searching for better methods to count "highly mobile people", or those that change their residence more than once every six months. Many fishermen that crew on commercial or charter vessels fit that description, migrating with the changing fishing seasons. "If these fishermen are not counted then the Census will reflect numbers that are too low", stated Dr. Kitner. "The undercounting of those that make their living from the sea can lead to policy decisions that would inaccurately reflect impacts felt by these fishermen." Data collection efforts for the grant are being concentrated in a small fishing community in South Carolina and include in-depth personal interviews with area fishermen, compilation and categorization of social data, and periodic reports to the National Census Bureau.



**Crew members often migrate with the fishing seasons. A new study is helping to identify this "highly mobile" population. Final results will be presented at the June Council meeting.**

This census project will serve the Council by helping to obtain social data to be incorporated in existing and future fishery management plans. "While my efforts are being concentrated in South Carolina, this project will provide a broader insight into the overall collection of data for those populations classified as 'highly mobile,'" explains Dr. Kitner. "This project will help the Census Bureau to learn how they might improve strategies for better enumeration of the US population. It allows for a collaboration that benefits both agencies."

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## Powerhead Gear Use Addressed at March Meeting

After reviewing comments from a public hearing held in February and additional testimony during a public comment period at its March meeting, the Council passed a motion to not take any action regarding the use of powerhead gear by divers off the East Coast of Florida at this time. Over 80 people attended the public hearing in Atlantic Beach, Florida - the majority to voice their opposition to restricting the use of powerhead gear. Commercial, charter/headboat and recreational fishermen addressed the Council again in March, stating the need to work together on a local level to resolve user conflict issues. Particular emphasis was placed on the use of Special Management Zones (SMZs) in areas where access may be restricted to certain gear types. Rob Darner, President of the Jacksonville Offshore Sportfishing Club stated, "I would like to envision a day when we no longer need SMZs because we've managed our resources so well...but until then, yes, I think we do need to go ahead and consider some special zones. If we address each other's concerns we will all be better off in the future." The Council will review requests for SMZ designations for existing artificial reefs in the area.

### A Reminder:

No person may possess more than two **cobia** per day in or from the Gulf, Mid-Atlantic or South Atlantic EEZ, regardless of the number of trips or the duration of the trip. Minimum size limit is 33" FL.

Also, during May and June the possession of **mutton snapper** in or from the EEZ on vessels with a commercial snapper grouper permit is limited to 10 per person per day **or** 10 per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive. Minimum size limit is 16 " TL.

## SAFMC Meeting Dates & Locations for 2001

### March 5-9

Jekyll Island Club Hotel  
Jekyll Island Club, GA  
Phone: 912-635-2600

### September 17-21

Town & Country Inn  
Charleston SC  
Phone: 843-571-1000

### June 18-22

Radisson Ponce de Leon  
St. Augustine FL  
Phone: 904-824-2821

### December 3-7

Blockade Runner Hotel  
Wrightsville Beach, NC  
Phone: 910-256-2251

## South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting

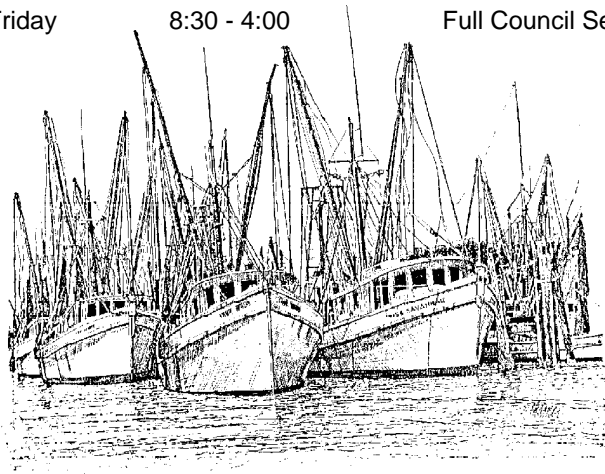
**June 18-22, 2001**  
**Radisson Ponce de Leon**  
**4000 US Highway 1 North**  
**St. Augustine, FL 32095**  
**904/824-2821 or 1-800/333-3333**  
**Preliminary Agenda\***

Sunday	1:30 - 5:30	Social Science Workshop
Monday	8:30 - 5:30	Scientific & Statistical Committee Meeting
Tuesday	8:30 - 12:00 1:30 - 5:00 6:00 PM	Joint Mackerel Committee & Advisory Panel (AP) Meeting Snapper Grouper Committee Meeting <b>Rock Shrimp Public Hearing</b>
Wednesday	8:30 - 10:00 10:00 - 5:30	Snapper Grouper Committee Meeting (continued) Joint Controlled Access Committee & Rock Shrimp AP Meeting
Thursday	8:30 - 10:30 10:30 - 6:00	Joint Controlled Access Committee & Rock Shrimp AP Meeting (Cont.) Marine Reserves Committee Meeting
Friday	8:30 - 4:00	Full Council Session

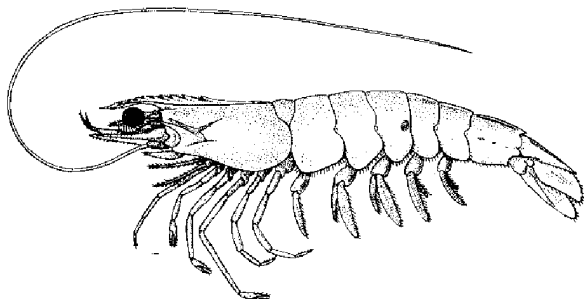
\* Agenda subject to change.

For a detailed agenda contact the Council office  
at 843/571-4366 or by FAX at 843/769-4520.  
The agenda is also available on the Council's  
web site [www.safmc.noaa.gov](http://www.safmc.noaa.gov)

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**The South Atlantic Fishery  
Management Council will meet  
June 18-22, 2001  
in  
St. Augustine, FL**



## **WANTED!**

**Public Comment Regarding the Following Issues:**

**Marine Protected Areas**

**Proposed Rock Shrimp Limited Access**

**Management Measures Proposed for Penaeid  
(white, brown & pink) Shrimp Fishermen**

**See inside for details or go online at [www.safmc.noaa.gov](http://www.safmc.noaa.gov)**



